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601 Coola social organization, and of the absence of standardized obligations based upon specific relationships.

Slaves

567 Since a slave was[11] without status in the Bella Coola community, it is perhaps incorrect to include a description of [554] slavery in a chapter on social organization; but as slaves lived in the Bella Coola villages, it seems reasonable to include them when dealing with the different units of the tribe. It was 162 impossible to obtain an accurate estimate of their number in 567 Bella Coola; slavery has been so long abandoned that the present natives could only hazard vague guesses. Judging from conversational remarks by elderly men, it seems probable that in the old days there was a considerable slave population in every Bella Coola village, comprising at times as much as thirty to forty per cent of the total population.

567 When a party raided a village most of the inhabitants were 727 slain, but some, especially children, young adults, or famous chiefs were captured. As far as could be learned, once a captive had reached Bella Coola he was in little danger, since torture or systematic slaying after the heat of battle had subsided was not a Bella Coola characteristic. The leader of the expedition retained many of the captives as his own slaves, and distributed others among his followers. Anyone, chief [422] or commoner, could own slaves in the same way that he could own any other type of goods.

567 Like any other commodity, slaves were bought and sold. 437 The Bella Coola were usually so well provided with salmon that they were able to exchange these fish with the members [622] of other tribes for slaves. Lack of strong chieftainship among [726] the Bella Coola hindered their success in war, so that most of [431] their slaves were obtained by trade. To the same category [773] belong those obtained as presents at potlatches. If, however, a member of one of the tribes on the lower Fraser River was [648]

[11] One of the first effects of the white man's establishment in British Columbia was the freeing of all slaves. Consequently the past tense is used in this section.

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thus been slain about seventy years earlier. It appears that attempts were commonly made to kill chiefs by means of sympathetic magic, and it is quite possible that such attempts, becoming known, preyed upon the minds of the victims to such an extent that death resulted.

578 622 682 [754]

WEALTH

Since wealth is so important in chieftainship, it would be desirable at this point to consider the concepts of wealth. Unfortunately, it is impossible to give a satisfactory treatment of this subject. The coming of the white man altered the economic aspects of Bella Coola life so radically, and at such an early period, that concrete examples of economic interdependence, so useful in a thorough study, could not be obtained in the field. It is possible that greater attention to this subject might have produced more satisfactory results, but I am doubtful of this.

114 177 556*

In the old days, "wealth" was of two categories: (*a*) Prerogatives, tangible or intangible, which could be shown, pictorially or dramatically, or could be expounded in words; and (*b*) Goods which could be distributed for validating such prerogatives. Individual possessions, unsuited for distribution, were hardly considered as wealth; a sewing-machine, a bottle of whiskey, a bed, or some other luxury might give satisfaction to the owner, but did not increase his importance in the eyes of his fellows. The value of objects was only for their use in ceremonial distribution; indeed, prior to such distribution, they were only of potential value. This attitude controlled Bella Coola economics in the early days of contact, and still influences their behaviour. A native store-keeper once ruefully commented on the fact that he would gain no advantage from the goods on his shelves, since he hoped merely to sell them, not to give them away.

556* [422] [177]

A man's relatives were expected to help him in the acquisition of goods, but the extent of their contributions was never

184 476 556*

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turns, clad in his ceremonial costume, including a long cape with pockets. With him come the four or five young men who have just finished dancing. The singers beat time furiously with their sticks, and the *siki* whirls round and round, working himself into a frenzy with twists and gyrations. Gradually, he approaches one of the initiates, and pretends to pluck something from his body. As he opens his hands the spectators see that there is something in them, what exactly, they cannot distinguish. Only those who are *sisaok* understand that, whatever it is, it has been palmed from one of his cape pockets. He pretends to throw this object upwards, at the same time slipping it back into his cape. As the article is, theoretically, thrown aloft the sound of whistling is heard, which grows weaker and weaker till it finally ceases. Meanwhile the heralds discourse loudly with one another about how the "eagle" or whatever it is, has been extracted, and is now returning above. The same procedure is repeated for the other initiates. This concludes the night's ceremony. Food is distributed and the people disperse.

The employment of a foreign *siki* to expel the power from the initiates is necessary since this particular prerogative is not native to Bella Coola. Formerly the expulsion was done in the back-room without any elaborate ceremony. This rite marks the admission of initiates into the *sisaok* society although they cannot yet leave the back-room. It must be understood, however, that a youth may be initiated several times, on each occasion receiving new songs and perhaps a different mask. In this way his prestige as a *sisaok* is increased, and the son of a powerful chief will often be initiated ten or more times. A mask so acquired is preserved in concealment as the personal property of the owner who may use it at potlatches on future occasions. It will be the guise in which a dead person returns to visit the living. After being used for this purpose, a mask may be burnt, or willed to a near relative of the deceased, who slightly alters the painting before using it himself.

It is somewhat difficult to understand the attitude of those

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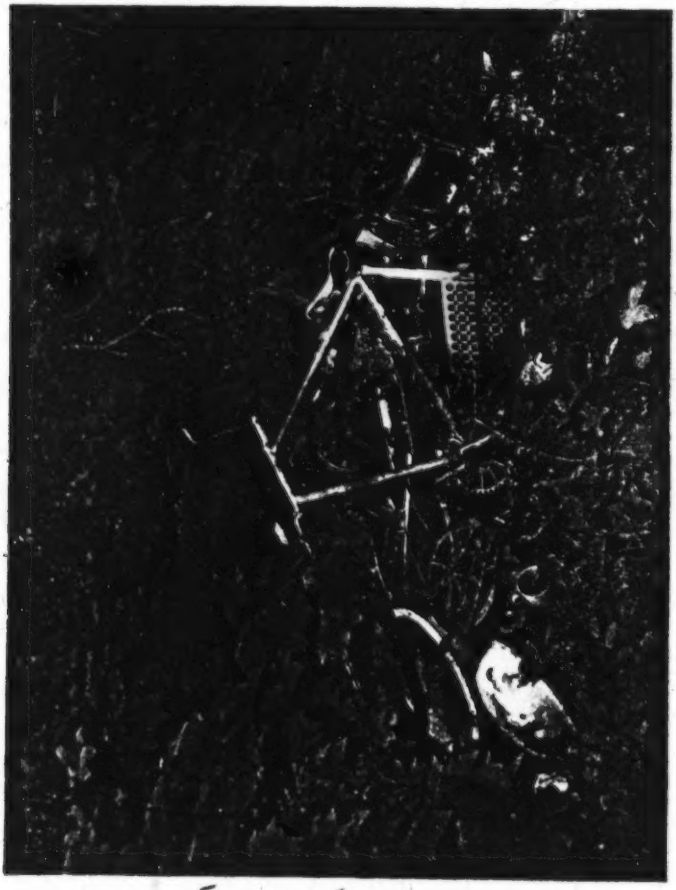

Photograph by H. I. Smith *National Museum of Canada*

Personal possessions laid on a grave

422
764

[P442(A)]

2: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
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not considered necessary. With few exceptions, hereafter to be noted, *kusiut* masks are burnt at the conclusion of each ceremony, a practice which probably originated in order to avoid the possibility of their being seen by the uninitiated. The Bella Coola state that this is one of the most striking differences between their rites and those of the Bella Bella.

Next in importance to masks are whistles (see Plate 2). The large, cone-shaped form used in *sisaok* ceremonial is replaced in *kusiut* dances by a smaller type consisting of portions of wood glued together, which can be blown with ease from beneath a concealing blanket. Another type has bellows consisting of a mountain goat bladder, which is held beneath the arm-pit so that it can be worked invisibly. During the summer the whistles are kept by one individual, usually a marshal. Specific information concerning the ownership of these whistles could not be obtained; it appears that any *kusiut* can make one, or have one made for him by a skilled carpenter, and that their retention by one person during the summer is merely for convenience. They are freely lent to anyone for use in a ceremony.

In some dances special objects are used in connection with dramatic performances, such as bull-roarers, wooden representations of animals, birds, or miniature human beings. One old man described a pipe formerly used at *Täl·io*, which had a carved bowl as large as a tea-cup with three radiating stems. It was carved from a knotty excrescence on a beech bole. Little could be learnt of its history, except that it was supposed to have been carved by a chief with the design of his patron and displayed through pride.

The usual guests at a performance of the type just summarized are the dancer's fellow-villagers and any strangers who happen to be present in the town. Great as is the desire of the *kukusiut* to impress their uninitiated tribesmen, they are still more eager to impress strangers, hence the presence of Carriers adds piquancy to the rites. The writer believes that his presence and interest encouraged the Bella Coola to

[see category 116, p 84(B) - ANALYST]

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726 cold sticks to sleep. Meanwhile, their wives at home were
784 required to be very careful, since a woman's heedless playing
722 would cause injury to her husband, and faithlessness, his death. These restrictions were obligatory during the absence of the expedition.

726 As the party neared the enemy's country, they would conceal the craft under projecting trees by day and travel only at night. When within striking distance, a scouting canoe was sent forward to learn the hostile dispositions, the best means of approach, and so forth. This was usually done at dusk, and when the scouts had returned, the party would steal quietly through the forest and hide behind the unsuspecting village. At dawn the leader would give the signal, and the attackers would rush forward with a fierce shout, killing all the men and
[727] seizing women and children as slaves. When captives were
[422] taken by slave members of the expedition, they belonged to
[567] the latter's masters. The victors would cut off the heads of their victims, seize what loot they could, set fire to the village and rush home before support could arrive from neighbouring towns. At first, the slaughter was usually a somewhat unpleasant task, but as the warriors became inflamed with the heat of battle, they began to delight in killing, and even women and children frequently suffered.

727 The exulting victors sped homewards, rejoicing at their success but somewhat fearful that they might be cut off by overwhelming reinforcements. During the journey, each warrior who had taken a head removed the scalp by cutting the skin around the cranium close above the eyebrows and ears. These trophies were washed at the rock *Skolsexumnsta* on the
[533] fiord below Bella Coola. When within sight of home, the captain stood up in the canoe and sang again his *xe·tla* song, a symbol of victory as the bloody scalps were held aloft. Women and children would rush forth to greet the conquerors who landed amid scenes of wild enthusiasm and rejoicing.

[422] Prisoners of war became the property of those who had
[567] taken them, with the exception of those captured by slaves.

2: McIlwraith E-5 (1922-1924) 1948
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If the war had not been of long duration in which extremely bitter feelings had been aroused, captives were often ransomed by their relatives, who came unmolested for the purpose when the heat of battle had subsided. Failing this, prisoners remained as slaves, the children especially growing up virtually as members of their owner's family as far as food and clothing were concerned, though never sharing in the prowess of his ancestral family. Torture or killing of prisoners seems to have been a rare practice. One extremely old Kimsquit woman related that in her childhood she had seen a captive stretched out on the hot rocks at the side of the ocean, fastened there, his testes crushed with stones, and allowed to die. No other similar traditions could be obtained and it seems probable that this must have been an unusual case. It is true that hostilities have long ceased, but the Bella Coola have clear recollections of other long-abandoned customs, and it is unlikely that torture was ever a common occurrence. It is, of course, one about which reticence is to be expected, but information would have been obtainable if the custom had been common or if it had been one which played an important part in the lives of the Bella Coola.

Scalps were hung on a cord and dried like salmon, then suspended as valuable trophies in the taker's house. When setting out on a war expedition, he would often cover his head with one, holding it in position by weaving its hair into his own. At a man's death, they were either inherited by his heirs or, more often, burnt with his other possessions. It is said that the Fort Rupert people used to tie scalps in bundles to their masks. When the Bella Coola went to war to retaliate for a murder, instead of scalping a victim, they sometimes brought back his whole head and impaled it on a stake over the grave of the person avenged.

At this late period it is virtually impossible to form any opinion as to the amount of bloodshed in wars waged by the Bella Coola. Several of the older people spoke in gloating terms of the slaughter accomplished by their ancestors, but all

6:Boas E-5 (1886-ca. 1890)1892
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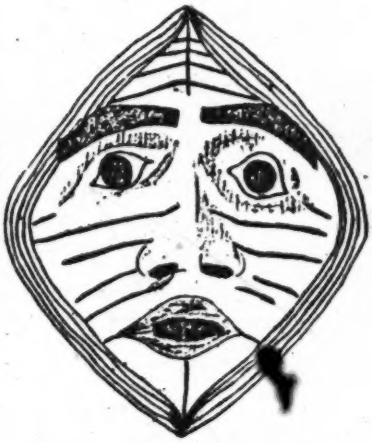
575 773 776 796

trails of ermine skins, and to swing carved rattles. The man, later on, returned to the sun. Ever since that time the Bilqula dance the Sisau'kH. Besides this it is stated that the Raven gave each gens its secrets.

FIG. 8.—Mask representing K'ômk'ômkt'likya.

FIG. 9.—Mask representing K'ula'qawa.



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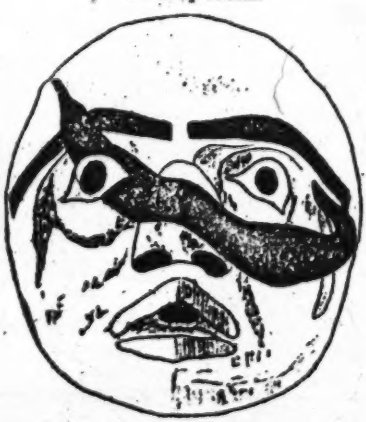
Each gens has its peculiar carvings, which are used in the Sisau'kH only, and are otherwise kept a deep secret, *i.e.*, they are the sacred possessions of each gens. All gentes, however, wear the beautiful carved headdresses and use the raven rattles, regardless of the carving they represent.

FIG. 10.—Mask representing Kulé'lias.

FIG. 11.—Mask representing Tl'étsa'aplêtlana.



[575] [776]

[534] [292]

6:Boas E-5 (1886-ca. 1890)1892
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represent. Every time the sacred objects of a gens are shown to the people a potlatch is given. The sacred objects, although the property of the various gentes, must nevertheless be acquired by each individual. That is to say, every free person has the right to acquire a certain group of carvings and names, according to the gens to which he or she belongs. Slaves and slaves' children, also illegitimate children, could not become Sisaw'kH. A person cannot take a new carving, but must wait until it is given to him by his relatives—father, mother, or elder brother. Nusk'ɛ-lu'sta, to whom I owe my information regarding the gentes, and who is a member of the gens Ialo'stimōt of the Talio'mH, stated that he had received the raven when he gave his first potlatch. At his second potlatch he received the eagle. He hopes that his mother will give him the whale at his next potlatch, and will at the same time divulge to him the secrets connected with it. In course of time, he said, he might get even others from his brother; but if the latter's children should prove to be very good, and develop very rapidly, his brother would probably give his secrets to his children. At festivals, when a person acquires a new secret, he changes his name. Each person has two names, a Kū'siūt name, which remains the same throughout life; and a Qē'mtsiqa name, which is changed at these festivals. Thus, Nusk'ɛlu'sta's (which is his Kū'siūt name) present Qē'mtsiqa name is Atl'iNEmnɛ'lus'siH, but at his next potlatch he intends to take the name of Kaliā'kis. These names are also the property of the various gentes, each gens having its own names. In the list of gentes given above, the names enumerated are the Kū'siūt names of the ancestors. In two cases only the Qē'mtsiqa names have been ascertained (see p. 409). When a man possesses several Sisaw'kH secrets he will distribute them among his children. When a girl marries, her father or mother may, after a child has been born to her, give one or several of their Sisaw'kH secrets to her husband, as his children make him a member of the gens. When a person gets to be old he gives away all his Sisaw'kH secrets. After any secret has been given away the giver must not use it any more. The crest and the Sisaw'kH carvings must not be loaned to others, but each person must keep his own carvings. The only exceptions are the carved headdresses and the raven rattles, which are not the property of any particular gens.

The laws regarding the potlatch are similar to those of the Kwakiutl. The receiver of a present becomes the debtor of the person who gave the potlatch. If the latter should die the debts become due to his heirs. If the debtor should die his heirs become responsible for the debt. Property is also destroyed at potlatches. This is not returned, and serves only to enhance the social position of the individual who performed this act. It is not necessary that all the property given by a person in a potlatch should be owned by him. He may borrow part of it from his friends, and has to repay it with interest. I was told, for instance, that a man borrowed a large copper-plate and burnt it at a potlatch. When doing so he had to name the price which he was going to pay to the owner in its stead. Since that feast he died, and his heirs are now responsible for the amount named at the potlatch.

The Kū'siūt is presided over by a female spirit, called Anaūlikūtsai'H. Her abode is a cave in the woods, which she keeps shut from February till October, remaining all the while inside. In October she opens the door of her cave and sits in front of it. A woman is said to have been the first to find her. Anaūlikūtsai'H invited her into her cave and taught